

Rappite Tavern
South side of Church Street between
Main and Brewery Streets
New Harmony
Posey County
Indiana

HABS No. IND-39

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

RAPPITE TAVERN

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Location: South side of Church Street between Main and
Brewery Streets, New Harmony, Posey County, Indiana

Present Owner: State of Indiana

Brief Statement
of Significance: This three-story brick structure, built in 1823, was
part of the Utopian communities of George Rapp and
Robert Owen.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Owned by the Harmony Society from 1823 to 1826; owned by the Owenite Community from 1826.
2. Date of erection: Built 1823.
3. Builder, suppliers: The Harmony Society.
4. Notes on alterations and additions: In 1823 the Harmony Society designed and constructed this building, which was their third dormitory. Between 1826-1827, this dormitory was converted to a tavern. The building was rebuilt in 1890, and only the foundations and exterior walls are original.
5. Important old views: Pictures in the library and museum at New Harmony, Indiana.
6. Sources of information: Interview with Don Blair, New Harmony, Indiana. Information in the Workingman's Institute, New Harmony, Indiana.

- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: New Harmony was the home of two of the most widely known Utopian experiments tried in the United States. The first, The Harmony Society, from 1814 to 1824, was under the spiritual leadership of George Rapp. The community prospered under the business management of his adopted son, Frederick. This group, from Wurttemberg, Germany, united by their common belief in the imminent second coming of Christ, practiced celibacy. The second was under Robert Owen, a Scotch philanthropist and reformer, who brought scientists and teachers to the Middle West, including William Maclure. Robert Owen named the town New Harmony in 1826.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is a simple, three-story, brick building, built in 1823 and altered in 1890.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is in very poor condition and there is a possibility that it may be demolished.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Rectangular shape, 45'-8" x 76'-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
The long dimension is north and south and the building faces north.
2. Foundations: Brick with stone footings.
3. Wall construction: Solid brick--1'-4" at first floor, 1'-1" at second floor; and 10" at third floor.
4. Openings:
 - a. Doors: Panel doors with two lights.
 - b. Windows: Double-hung six-light windows.
5. Roof:
 - a. Shape: Built-up roof pitched slightly from front to rear.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Sheet-iron cornice and window head trim on front added in 1890.
6. Chimneys: Brick.
7. Porch: One-story porch, full width of the front, supported by four sets of paired wood columns with large molded brackets on the two center pairs of columns. There is a balustraded balcony over the center third of the porch with sawn balusters.

C. Technical Descriptions of Interiors:

1. Floor plan: Office, eating, and tavern areas on the first floor; guest rooms on the second and third floors.
2. Stairways: Open stairway from first to third floor with straight-run stairs; enclosed stair to cellar below.
3. Flooring: Plank floor.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Interior walls plastered on wood lath. Exterior walls plastered on brick. Ceiling plastered on wood lath.
 5. Doorways and doors: Cased openings with paneled doors.
 6. Hardware: Wrought-iron locks with porcelain door handles; wrought-iron hinges.
 7. Lighting: None.
 8. Heating: Coal-fired furnaces added about 1920.
- D. Site: The building faces north and is situated in the center of a small town, on the south side of an east-west highway, approximately 300 feet east of the intersection with Main Street.

Prepared by Norman R. Jeffries
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